

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method of managing electric power generators, comprising the steps of:

(a) a managing device transmitting, via the Internet to either an electric power generator to be managed or an electric-power-generator-end communications device connected to an electric power generator to be managed, a request for a transmission of generated power quantity information for the electric power generator;

(b) either the electric power generator or the communications device transmitting the generated power quantity information indicating a generated power quantity for the electric power generator back to the managing device in response to the request;

(c) the managing device storing the generated power quantity information into a database in association with the electric power generator which transmitted back the generated power quantity information or the electric power generator to which is connected the communications device which transmitted back the generated power quantity information; and

(d) the managing device deciding a timing to transmit a request for a transmission of generated power quantity information for the electric power generators.

2. The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of (e) the managing device determining whether the electric power generator corresponding to the generated power quantity information stored in step (c) is broken or suffering a reduction in power generation capability on the basis of the generated power quantity information.

3. The method of claim 1, wherein:

the electric power generator is a solar cell; and

step (c) includes the step of (f) obtaining weather information indicating weather at a location of the electric power generator to store the weather information into the database, together with the generated power quantity information for the electric power generator.

4. The method of claim 3, wherein:

in step (b), the electric power generator or the communications device transmits back weather information at a location of the electric power generator together with the generated power quantity information; and

in step (f), the managing device stores the weather information transmitted back.

5. The method of claim 3, further comprising the step of (g)

the managing device predicting a generated power quantity for the electric power generator corresponding to the weather information stored in step (c) on the basis of the weather information.

6. The method of claim 5, further comprising the step of (h) the managing device determining whether the electric power generator corresponding to the generated power quantity information stored in step (c) is broken or suffering a reduction in power generation capability on the basis of the generated power quantity information and the generated power quantity as predicted in step (g).

7. The method of claim 1, wherein the electric power generator is a solar cell,

the method further comprising the steps of:

(i) the managing device obtaining location information indicating locations of electric power generators to be managed to divide the electric power generators into groups according the location information, each group consisting of those generators located at the same location; and

(j) the managing device comparing the generated power quantity information, stored in step (c), for those electric power generators divided into the same group in step (i) in order to determine whether any of the electric

power generators is broken or suffering a reduction in power generation capability.

8. The method of claim 7, wherein in step (b), the electric power generator or the communications device transmits back location information at a location of the electric power generator together with the generated power quantity information.

9. The method of claim 1, wherein in step (b), the electric power generator or the communications device transmits back identification information by which the electric power generator corresponding to generated power quantity information is identified, together with the generated power quantity information.

10. The method of claim 1, wherein the generated power quantity information includes generated power quantity information for individual modules constituting the electric power generator.

11. A managing device for electric power generators, comprising:

transmission request means for transmitting, via the Internet to either an electric power generator to be

managed or an electric-power-generator-end communications device connected to an electric power generator to be managed, a request for a transmission of generated power quantity information for the electric power generator;

registering means for registering the generated power quantity information into a database in association with the electric power generator or the communications device upon transmitting the generated power quantity information back from the electric power generator or the communications device; and

timing decision means for deciding a timing for the transmission request means to transmit the request.

12. A computer program causing a computer to operate as a managing device for electric power generators, the computer program causing the computer to execute the steps of:

(k) transmitting, via the Internet to either an electric power generator to be managed or an electric-power-generator-end communications device connected to an electric power generator to be managed, a request for a transmission of generated power quantity information for the electric power generator;

(l) registering the generated power quantity

information into a database in association with the electric power generator or the communications device upon transmitting the generated power quantity information back from the electric power generator or the communications device;

(m) deciding a timing to transmit a request for a transmission in step (k).

13. A storage medium containing a computer program causing a computer to operate as a managing device for electric power generators, the computer program causing the computer to execute the steps of:

(k) transmitting, via the Internet to either an electric power generator to be managed or an electric-power-generator-end communications device connected to an electric power generator to be managed, a request for a transmission of generated power quantity information for the electric power generator;

(l) registering the generated power quantity information into a database in association with the electric power generator or the communications device upon transmitting the generated power quantity information back from the electric power generator or the communications device;

(m) deciding a timing to transmit a request for a

transmission in step (k).

14. An electric power generator, comprising:

receiving means for receiving a request for a transmission addressed to the electric power generator via the Internet from a managing device having timing decision means for deciding timings to transmit a request for a transmission of generated power quantity information for electric power generators to be managed; and

reply means for transmitting generated power quantity information indicating a generated power quantity for the electric power generator back to the managing device in response to the request.

15. The electric power generator of claim 14, wherein the receiving means and the reply means are connected to the Internet via an electric power line transmitting electric power generated by the electric power generator.

16. A computer program causing a computer in an electric power generator to execute the steps of:

(o) receiving a request for a transmission addressed to the electric power generator via the Internet from a managing device having timing decision means for deciding timings to transmit a request for a transmission of

generated power quantity information for electric power generators to be managed; and

(p) transmitting generated power quantity information indicating a generated power quantity for the electric power generator back to the managing device in response to the request.

17. A storage medium containing a computer program causing a computer in an electric power generator to execute the steps of:

(o) receiving a request for a transmission addressed to the electric power generator via the Internet from a managing device having timing decision means for deciding timings to transmit a request for a transmission of generated power quantity information for electric power generators to be managed; and

(p) transmitting generated power quantity information indicating a generated power quantity for the electric power generator back to the managing device in response to the request.

18. A communications device connectable to an electric power generator, comprising:

receiving means for receiving a request for a transmission addressed to the communications device via



the Internet from a managing device having timing decision means for deciding timings to transmit a request for a transmission of generated power quantity information for electric power generators to be managed; and

reply means for transmitting generated power quantity information indicating a generated power quantity for the electric power generator connected to the communications device back to the managing device in response to the request.

19. The communications device of claim 18, wherein the receiving means and the reply means are connected to the Internet via an electric power line transmitting electric power generated by the electric power generator.

20. A computer program causing a computer connectable to an electric power generator to operate as a communications device, the computer program causing the computer to execute the steps of:

(q) receiving a request for a transmission addressed to the communications device via the Internet from a managing device having timing decision means for deciding timings to transmit a request for a transmission of generated power quantity information for electric power generators to be managed; and

(r) transmitting generated power quantity information indicating a generated power quantity for the electric power generator connected to the communications device back to the managing device in response to the request.

21. A storage medium containing a computer program causing a computer connectable to an electric power generator to operate as a communications device, the computer program causing the computer to execute the steps of:

(q) receiving a request for a transmission addressed to the communications device via the Internet from a managing device having timing decision means for deciding timings to transmit a request for a transmission of generated power quantity information for electric power generators to be managed; and

(r) transmitting generated power quantity information indicating a generated power quantity for the electric power generator connected to the communications device back to the managing device in response to the request.

22. A system for managing electric power generators, comprising: a managing device for electric power generators; and electric power generators to be managed by the managing device for electric power generators,

the managing device for electric power generators including: transmission request means for transmitting a request for a transmission of generated power quantity information for an electric power generator to the electric power generator via the Internet; registering means for registering the generated power quantity information into a database in association with the electric power generator upon the electric power generator transmitting back the generated power quantity information; and timing decision means for deciding timings to transmit a request for a transmission by the transmission request means,

the electric power generator including: receiving means for receiving a request for a transmission addressed to the electric power generator from the managing device; and reply means for transmitting generated power quantity information indicating a generated power quantity for the electric power generator back to the managing device in response to the request.

23. The system of claim 22, wherein the receiving means and the reply means are connected to the Internet via an electric power line transmitting electric power generated by the electric power generator.

24. A system for managing electric power generators,

comprising: a managing device for electric power generators; and electric-power-generator-end communications devices connected to electric power generators to be managed by the managing device for electric power generators,

the managing device for electric power generators including: transmission request means for transmitting a request for a transmission of generated power quantity information for an electric power generator to the communications device via the Internet; registering means for registering the generated power quantity information into a database in association with the communications device upon the communications device transmitting back the generated power quantity information; and timing decision means for deciding timings to transmit a request for a transmission by the transmission request means,

the communications device including: receiving means for receiving a request for a transmission addressed to the communications device from the managing device; and reply means for transmitting generated power quantity information indicating a generated power quantity for the electric power generator connected to the communications device back to the managing device in response to the request.

25. The system of claim 24, wherein the receiving means and the reply means are connected to the Internet via an electric power line transmitting electric power generated by the electric power generator.